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yond the domain of pigments, and can only be achieved in the clear regions of an undefiled imagination.

I am now content to sit for an hour each morning, near this morning-glory of Art. I feel stronger and clearer for the day. The hour is like a season of earnest communion with one's self with one's interior life, like the singing of morning songs.

I come to the galleries early, the floors have been swept, the window shades arranged with reference to the eastern light, the "Custodes" walk leisurely along the silent corridor, and at intervals footsteps upon the stone stairs announce the arrival of artists, who are engaged in copying—a strange company of "seekers," gathered from the far corners of the earth. The youth yonder with the fine cold face, who pauses in his slow walk, as he finds himself opposite the Venus de Medici, is a Greek and an Athenian, the lady near him is a Russian, and he who hurries past is an American; the old man with the snow-white hair and the pale placid face is a copyist in miniature, a native of Florence, who has spent his whole life in the galleries, copying the same pictures from early boyhood; this is all the world he is conscious of, these cities, countries, and seas, are the only ones over which he has travelled, these forms his only companions, among whom are his friends, true and tried. Father, mother, brothers and sisters were shadows, and *they* vanished long ago; throngs of phantoms have filled the rooms, have been grouped, seeming like pictures, and have disappeared. *His* companions are not thus fleeting. He sits apart, his soul calmed and blessed in the assurance of the immutability of all he loves; they gaze upon him alone, and that smile of ineffable sweetness is the same holy blessing now, as when it beamed upon him in his youth, from the lips of the saintly maiden above him. He never passes this old picture of Fra Angelico's without feeling its beauty, and his expression of peace, "peace which passeth all understanding," is beyond description. I touch him lightly upon the arm, he steps back and we stand together by the window; the sympathy of the simple-hearted old man is very pleasant to me. The morning light illumines the gold back-ground of the picture, and glances back from the gilded wings and burnished instruments of the heavenly choir. The large Madonna in the centre, although serene and beautiful, was too large for the pencil of the artist, whose hand had been educated in the school of the missal illuminators, but surrounding that is a margin, where are painted the band of angels. We looked upon those unspeakably lovely faces in silence, as I always do, and thought of him who refused all worldly honors for the love of an art, through which alone he could make known his views of the after life, and of the blissful state of the redeemed and sanctified in the mansions prepared for them—the humble cloistered worker, to whom that "Art was henceforth a hymn of praise." No embroidered robes for him, no mitre, no crown.

"He never began a picture without prayer," a fact which reveals to us another fact; he was earnest and reverent, and, smile as we may at the simplicity of the monk who could not "sketch in" a picture without prayer, *without* those qualities of earnestness and reverence, indicated by such a proceeding, no artist ever can achieve the immortal. The only entrance to Michael Angelo's studio was through his chapel.

But my morning hour has passed, the old man steals silently away to his picture, and the visitors begin to crowd the halls and corridors. You will pardon me for lingering thus, far back, beyond what we look upon as the summer of Art, when such men as Michael Angelo, Da Vinci, and Raphael walked these streets, for although love detained me, and beauty rewarded my devotion, another power aside from that

would have held me to a brief communion with those evangelists of art, a power, which without love would have been duty, inasmuch as the great masters *cannot* be understood without some knowledge of those who were *their* masters. To one that knows nothing of Perugino, nor of Massacio, Raphael is an unaccountable phenomenon, but *they* explain *him*, as Massacio is himself explained, by Ghiberti, and his wonderful bronze gates. It is better that these divine men should be viewed in the light of the truth *they* saw and profited by. Better that we should see that the footsteps which bore them to that heavenly height, were made upon the earth, along which the humblest pilgrim may tread. Nor were they ashamed to own their indebtedness to those who had walked before them. "Behold my master!" said the stern old sculptor of the "Day" and "Night," as he pointed to the colossal fragment of Hercules in the Vatican.

"I thank God that I have seen Michael Angelo!" said the divine Raphael.

Is it a wonder that these men became God-like?

But the studio calls me from the gallery, and the pen must be exchanged for the pencil.

ADIO.

ASSYRIAN SCULPTURES.—Nimroud is the name of the ruins upon the Tigris, a few miles below Mosul, where these remarkable relics were discovered in 1846 and 1847 by Mr. Layard. Few can be more impressed with the importance of these sculptures than one who, like myself, is in the habit of lecturing upon the general history of Art, and who, up to the period of the discoveries by M. Botta near Khorsabad, and of those by Mr. Layard, had been restricted to the small cylinder as the only specimen of Assyrian-Babylonian sculpture. The moral element of these sculptures may be at once defined as the glorification of power, bravery, and the dignity of man, as exemplified in the one ruler to whom all the other figures, each sufficiently powerful in himself, are subservient. Every detail combines to assist this impression: the peculiar type, variously modified, it is true, of the heads, with the piercing expression of the large deep-set eye—the aquiline and very prominent nose—the protruding lips—the strongly projecting chin, generally adorned with a dignified and carefully kept beard—all exhibit the character of a proud, firm, indomitable energy; while the general broad proportions, the exaggerated marking of the muscles, the inordinate strength of the arms (in which the power to seize and to hold are perfectly embodied), is found to correspond strictly with the expression of the head. Symbolism also has been made use of to increase the appearance of strength in the person of the ruler by attaching four bull's horns to his head-gear. The same intention is also still more evident in the frequently recurring colossal ox, and in the rarer figure of the lion, both represented with human heads of great dignity. This latter may be considered as the artistic realization of the surname "Man-lion," so frequently given to the heroes of Oriental song. The subjects also have all the same intention—the glorification of the strength of man, and above all that of the one ruler: successful battles—sieges—lion and stag hunts—in two sculptures at Paris, the strangling even of lions by the hands of the ruler himself, with representations of every kind of homage paid to him.

On the other hand, the religious element in the simple forms of the Assyrian worship is far less conspicuous here than in Indian and Egyptian monuments. The same may be said in a still greater degree of the feminine element. The seclusion of the women was according to strict Oriental custom. They are therefore seldom seen in these sculptures, and then only in subordinate relations—such as in the attitude of entreaty at sieges, in a conquered town, &c.

We must next analyse the nature of these sculptures as works of Art. In this sense they may be said to assume in some respects a very high, and in others an equally low position. The laws of plastic Art are admirably observed, both in the reliefs of various depths, of which the majority of these sculptures consist, and in the few specimens of sculpture in the round. The action expresses what is intended; the execution is sharp, clean, and often very careful: on the other hand, no knowledge of the human form is apparent; the proportions are generally arbitrary; the indications of the single and strongly pronounced muscles are, with few exceptions, given with the coarsest and most barbarous conventionality, especially in the legs, which, even when the upper part of the body fronts the spectator, are always represented in profile; the eyes, as with the Egyptians, are invariably in a front view; and the heads are destitute of all intellectual expression. The garments, with which, according to Oriental custom, most of the figures are amply draped, exclude, equally by their shape and by the thickness of material imitated, all indication of organic form. The figures of animals, however, are far more true to nature—horses, mules, and lions are frequently admirably formed and generally of very animated action; the only conventionality is in the treatment of the hair. Objects of architecture, utensils, trappings of horses, &c., are very perfectly rendered, frequently with good taste, though as frequently overlaid. To judge from the great artificial luxury which these latter objects display, and from the mechanical repetition of the conventional forms already described, it may be inferred that these sculptures, which must have taken an immense amount of power to execute, belong to the most flourishing period of the earlier Assyrian kingdom, from the time of Phal to that of Salmassar, from the year 760 to 730 before Christ. It is to be hoped that the deciphering of the numerous cuneiform inscriptions, in which the well-known Major Rawlinson is now engaged, will shortly throw light on this important question of date. The sculptures are in admirable preservation, which is the more surprising as they are almost exclusively composed of a soft gypseous stone. By means of these remains not only has a large gap in the history of Art been filled up, but the history of the world itself has gained a certain completeness with regard to facts on which all written sources of information were deficient; and a people and its ruler, with their character, their habits, and their costume, their relations in war and peace, are now presented clearly to our sight.—*Dr. Waagen.*

PARIS UNIVERSAL EXHIBITION.—Artists desiring to exhibit in the Exhibition of Works of Fine Arts and Industry, at Paris, next spring, are required to send in their works between this and the 15th of March, the galleries being now open for their reception; such works to be accompanied by the exhibitor's name, place of birth, and present address. The Lords of the Committee of Privy Council, in order to ensure the due representation of the art of painting in this country, have directed Captain Owen, R.E., to address the owners of private collections on the subject, and we hear that Lord Overstone, Mr. Sheepshanks, Mr. Thomas Baring, and some others, have already intimated their willingness to entrust to Her Majesty's Government those works in their collections which must be suggested by their respective artists.—*Artist.*

THE Sultan has always shown much interest in the Arts, and encouraged and recompensed artists; he has lately conferred upon M. Sebouh Manasse, painter to the imperial court, the order of *Medjidie* of the fifth class. This artist is at present attached, in the capacity of chief dragoman, to the Imperial Embassy at Paris, and has received orders to occupy himself with several miniatures for the Sultan.—*Ibid.*